

THE Godly Mans

Land
Request, *See L*



LONDON,
Printed for F. Cole, T. Vere, J. Wright and
J. Clark, 1676.

THE
Gentle Manners



LONDON

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Co. 1784

THE Godly Mans

Request,
OR,

Choice Flowers gathered
out of the Holy Scriptures, for the
Strengthening and support of weak and faint-
ing Souls in these times of trouble.

*Psal. 9. v. 12. Teach us O Lord to number our
days, that we may apply our hearts to Wisdom.*

*Isa. 14. v. 6. A voice said cry, and he said what
shall I cry, all flesh is grass, v. 8. The grass withereth,
the flower fadeth, but the word of God shall
stand for ever.*

The Fifth Edition with Additions. By I. C.

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The Godly mans Request.

Psal. 90. v. 12. Teach us O Lord to number our days that we may apply our hearts to Wisdome.

Isaiah 40. v. 6. A voice said cry, and he said what shall I cry, all flesh is grass, and v. 8. the grass withereth, the flower fadeth, but the Word of our God shall stand for ever.

This Psalm was compiled by Moses as you may see by the Title at what time the spies returned from the Land of Canaan, and God for the murmuring of the people pronounced that all which were above twenty years old should die in the wilderness, except Calib and Joshua that encouraged their brethren to go into Canaan, now when Moses heard the sentence of death pronounced against himself, and all the Jews, which came out of Egypt, except only two, Calib and Joshua, that all should die before they came to the land which
A 3 they

they fought, he prayeth thus for himself and the rest, Teach us O Lord to number our dayes, that we may apply our hearts unto Wisdome.

That is seeing we must needs dye, teach us to think of our death (that we may die in thy fear, to live for ever in thy favour, shewing us how the consideration of our mortality, will make us apply our hearts to godliness, therefore Moses thinking of his death runneth to Wisdome as a remedy against death, which intimates to us that the fear of God is the beginning of wisdome, therefore we must come to some schoolmaster which teacheth us like John Baptist what we should do, that we may grow in knowledge as we grow in years.

Teach me to number my days (saith Moses) that I may apply my heart to Wisdome. As a man that hath a set time for his task listens to the Clock and counts his hours, so we have a set time to serve God, John 9. v. 4. Work while it is day, the night cometh when no man can work.

That is this life is the day wherein we should work, what work we have to do the Apostle tells us (work out your salvation) this is a long task, therefore we have need to
number

number our dayes not to lose a minute least we be benighted before our work be done (Teach me O LORD to number my days, &c.

That is, that we may still be numbring and counting our dayes, and hours, and minutes, to see how fast we die, that every day and hour we may learn something of wisdom, unless we think upon death we cannot fashion our selves to a godly life, though we were as well instructed as Moses, this we find dayly in our selves, that the forgetfulness of death, makes us apply our hearts unto folly and pleasure and voluptuousness, that contrary to his advice (work your salvation) we work our damnation, we are so far from numbring our dayes, that we do not number our weeks, nor our months, nor our years, much less number our dayes, Oh my beloved friends and Christians, who shall be present at the reading of this little book: my Prayers shall be to the throne of Grace, That we may be so taught to number our dayes that we may apply our hearts to Wisdom.

To pray, and fast, and watch, and hear, and do as becometh him which shall shortly give account of his Stewardship with cheerfulness to his Lord and Master, and receive

that blessed and joyful benediction of love,
Well done thou good and faithful servant en-
ter into the joy of thy Lord: this shall be the
reward of those that apply their hearts to
wisdom.

There is no such enemy to Repentance as
to think we have time enough hereafter,
which makes a man say when any good mo-
tion cometh into his mind. I may stay yet a
little longer and defer my Repentance, for
I am Young in my Mouth, if I do take a
little pleasure, why God is a merciful God,
and he will pardon my sins if I truly repent,
I may stay yet like the sluggard, who turns
upon his Bed like a Dooz upon the Win-
ges and saith as in Prov. 6. v. 10. Yet a lit-
tle more sleep, a little more slumber, I may
lye still a while, this is not to number our
days, but to stretch our days, & to make them
seem more then they are, and they that do so
never apply their hearts to wisdom, so you
see what a preservative Moses used against sin
and pleasure.

He kept a Kalender as it were of his days
which called upon him and said, be diligent
for thou hast but a short time here. Five
things I note in these words.

First, that Death is the Haven of every
man

man and woman whether they sit in the throne, or live in a Cottage, at last we must knock at Deaths dore as all our fathers have done before us.

Secondly, that man's time is set and his bounds appointed, beyond which he cannot pass.

Thirdly, that our dayes are but few as though we were sent into the world but to see it: shewing that it is an easie thing for a man to number his dayes, they be so few.

Fourthly, the aptness of man to forget Death, as we have often experienced, when one man shall say to another, do you remember where you are to go to morrow, the other shall answer again and say, I protest I thought no more of it then of my Dying day, and therefore Moses prayeth to the Lord to teach him to number his dayes.

Fifthly and Lastly, that to remember how short a time we have to live, we may apply our hearts to that which is good, as every one had a day to come into this world: so surely they shall have a day to go out of this world. When Moses had spoken of some which lived seven hundred years and another that lived eight hundred years, and
and

another that liued nine hundred years, at last comes in Mortuus est, he died.

Therefore the Apostle saith, we have here no abiding City, but we look for one to come, as our Saviour saith, My Kingdome is not of this world, so we may say, our dwelling is not of this world, but the soul soareth upward whence she came, and the body stoopeth downward whence it came, our tabernacles are made to remoue, every man is a tenant at will, and there is nothing sure in this life but death.

When Adam and Eve were thrust out of Paradise by reason of their sins, God clothed them with the skins of dead Beasts, which shewed them that now they were clothed with Death, and that as the beasts were dead, whose skins they wore (so they should dye also) As Job. 17. verse 14. I shall say to corruption thou art my father, and say to the Worm, thou art my Mother, and Sister. Which made Solomon to say, that he should go the way of all the Earth. To which Isaiah bears witness, crying all flesh is grass, chap. 49. vers. 6. that is, it falleth, and is cut down like grass. In this world we live and must dye. In Heaven we shall live and not dye; before Sin nothing could
change

change us, and now every thing doth change us.

First, we war old, then we war Dye, then we war weak, then we war sick, so we melt away by Drops at last: as we carryed others, so others carry us to our Graves, that is the last bed that every man shall sleep in. We may well be called Earthen Vessels, for we are soon broken, we are like the Ice that thaweth a great deal sooner then it froze, so these little worlds, our Earthly tabernacles are destroyed first, and at last the great world shall be destroyed too and all in it, which was made for us shall perish with us, what do you learn when you think of this (but that which Moses saith) apply your hearts to wisdome.

The second note is, that the time of man is set, and his bounds appointed that he cannot pass, and Jeremiah saith, they could not stand because the day of their destruction is come, as all the promises of God are conditional to take place if we repent not.

The third point is, that our life is but a short life, as many little sculls, are in Golgotha as great sculls, that is as many young Children go to their grave, as Old people

people the Parents mourn for the death of their Children as often as Children for the death of their Parents : What a great change is this, that in Fourscore years, no one of us here that are hearers of this little Book shall be left alive, but others shall fill our Rooms, and tread upon us as we tread upon others now : Man dyeth when he thinks his Sun is a rising : before his Eye is satisfied with seeing, his Ear with hearing, or his heart with lusting, Death knocks at his door, and will not give him one minutes respite to meditate an excuse before he comes to judgement : which shewes the Shortness and Uncertainty of Man's Life.

This was the Arithmatique of Holy men in former times to reckon their dayes, so that their time might seem short, to make them apply their Hearts to Wisdom.

David numbr'd his days by a measure, My life saith he is like a span long, Psal. 39. v. 5. when he measured his life he took not a Pole or an Ell, nor a yard to measure it by, but a short measure, his short Span, My life is like a span long : As some came into the Vineyard in the Morning, some at Noon, and

and some at night, so some go out of this Vineyard in the Morning, some at Noon, and some at night, so that a pleasant life may be compared but to a glorious day, and a sorrowful life to a cloudy day, and a long life to a Summers day, and a short life to a winters day; now why hath God appointed such a short time to man in the world, surely least he should defer to do good as his manner is, for though his life be short, yet he thinks he hath time enough to repent, The Prophet saith our years are but threescore and ten, as though they were but a little time to live, if our life were but a year, yet a year is more by fifty one weeks then we use, all the rest be lost, for we defer our repentance till the last week of the year: it is said of the Devil he is busie, because his time is short, but the time of man is shorter; and therefore Christ saith, in this thy day, as though no day could be called thy day, but this day, and therefore all that thou hast to do, thou must do this day. Consider this all ye which travel towards Heaven, had we not need to make hast, which must go such a long journey in so short a time, how can he chuse but run which remembereth that every

every day runneth away with his life, how often doth the scripture put us in mind of our death, and yet we no sooner remember it but in a very short time its forget again; even so it is with us, as the Fooll saith in his heart there is no God, so we say in our hearts there is no death, or at least death will not come before we be old, of all numbers we cannot skill to number our dayes, we can number our Shéepe, and our Oren, and our Coyne, but we think that our dayes are infinite, and therefore we never go about to number them, we can number other mens days and years, and think they will dye ere it be long, if we see them sick, or soze, or old, but we cannot number our own.

Therefore the Devil doth never teach a man to number his dayes, because he gains by the forgetfulness of death, but the Lord which would have a man to apply his heart to Wisdome, it is he which teacheth us to number our dayes, and therefore Moses prayes unto him that he might apply his heart unto Wisdome, as if he should say, until men think upon death they never apply their hearts unto wisdome, but busies themselves with worldly matters as though they were feathering a nest that should never be pulled down

solon, therefore the way to get wisdom is
to apply your hearts unto it, as if it were
our Calling and Living, to which you are
bound Apprentices, a man may apply his ears
and his eyes, as many truants do their
Books, and yet never prove scholars, but
from that day which a man begins to apply
his heart unto wisdom, he learns more in a
moneth after, then he did in a year before,
more than ever he did in his life; even as you
see the wicked, because they apply their hearts
to wickedness how fast they proceed, how
easily and how quickly they become perfect
swearers, expert Drunkards, cunning De-
ceivers.

So if we could apply our hearts as throughly
to knowledge and goodness, we might
become like to the Apostle that teacheth us,
therefore when Solomon sheweth men the
way how to come by Wisdom, he speaks
often of the Heart, Give thy heart to wis-
dom, let wisdom enter into thy heart, get
wisdom, keep wisdom, embrace wisdom,
wisdom is like God's Daughter, that he
giveth to the man that loveth her, and surely
say her, and meaneth to see her at his Heart,
thus we have learned how to apply know-
ledge that it may do us good, not to our ears
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like them which hear Sermons only, nor to our tongues like them which make table-talk of Religion, but to our hearts that we may say with the Virgin, My Heart doth magnify the Lord, and the heart will apply it to the Ear, and to the tongue, as Christ saith, out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh.

The last point is, that the remembrance of death makes us to apply our hearts to wisdom, Moses commanded not a many books to a wise man Learned, but as David commends one book instead of many Meditations in the Law of God day and night, for the reading of many books (saith Solomon) is but weariness to the flesh, therefore as though Moses had marked what did move him most to seek after God, he prayeth that that thought may run in his mind still the remembrance of death, as many benefits come unto us by death, so many benefits come unto us by the remembrance of death, and this is one, viz.

It maketh a man to apply his Heart to wisdom; for when he considereth that he hath but a short time to live, he is careful to spend it well, like Moses, of whom it is said, that when he considered how he had but a season
 son

to live, he chose rather to suffer afflictions with the Servants of God, then to enjoy the pleasure of sin for a season, this is that which makes the old Men fast and watch, & prepare themselves more than young Men, because they think themselves nearer the Grave, like old Isaac which when he was blind for Age, said unto Esau, Behold I am now old and know not the day of my death, that is, because I am old I look to dye shortly, and therefore as Isaiah taught Ezechias to set all things in order before he died, so he called his eldest Son to whom he thought his Inheritance belonged that he might bless him before he dyed, this Wisdom the Fathers called the wisdom of the Cross which we call the best, because it was the dearest bought, it is hard for a man to think of a short life; and think evil, or to think of a long life, and think well, therefore when Jeremy had numbered all the Calamities and Sins of the Jews, at last he imputed all to his Lamentations the 1. and the 9. She remembered not her end. So if I may judge why Natural Men care for nothing but their Pomp, why great men care for nothing but

their Honor and Dignity, why covetous
 Worldlings care for nothing but their gain,
 why voluptuous Epicures care for nothing
 but their pleasure; I may say with Jeremy,
 (they remember not their end) we never co-
 vet the same things living and dying, there-
 fore when Solomon had spoken of all the Van-
 ities of men, at last he tells them all, Ec-
 cles. II. v. 9. Remember that for all these
 things thou shalt come to judgment, as if he
 should say, Men would never speak as they
 speak, nor do as they do, if they did but
 think their speeches and deeds should come
 to Judgment, as the Bird guideth her
 flight with her Trian, so the Life of Man
 is best directed with a continual recourse unto
 his end.

Which is in the numbering of our days,
 let us consider what a Harvest we have lost
 which happily before this time we never
 prayed with Moses that the Lord would
 teach us to number our days, so that we
 may apply our hearts to wisdom, but as
 the old year went, and a new year came,
 so we thought that a new year would follow
 that,

that, and so we think that another will follow this, and so they thought that are dead long ago.

This is not to number our days, but to provoke God to shorten our days, there are but few here but have seen twenty years, now if we had but every year learned one Vertue since we were born, we might by this time have been like Saints among men, but the time is yet to come, when we shall apply our hearts to Wisdom, to Riches and Pleasure we have applied our hearts, and our eyes and our ears, and our hands to, but to Wisdom we have not applied our hearts.

There be many causes, but there should be no cause if we had numbered our days, for surely if a man could persuade himself that this is the last day, as it may be he should not defer his Repentance until to morrow, if he could think that this is his last meal that ever he should eat, he should not surfeit of it, if he could believe that the words which he doth speak to day,

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should

should be the last words that ever he should
 speak, he would not offend which his tongue,
 if he could be perswaded that this Sermon
 should be the last Sermon that ever he
 should hear, he would hear it better then
 ever he heard any yet, whilst breath is in the
 body, the heart may apply it self and the eye
 may apply it self, and the ear may apply it self,
 and the hand may apply it self. **W**hile
 it is light, I can but admonish you
 with words, as John baptized with water,
 as Moses prayed the Lord to number his
 days, so you must pray the Lord to teach you
 to number your Days, it may be that thou
 hast but twenty years to serve God, wilt
 thou not live twenty years like a Christi-
 an, that thou maist live a thousand years
 like an Angel, it may be that thou hast
 but ten years to serve him, wilt not thou
 serve ten years for Heaven which would
 serve twenty years for a Farm, it may be
 that thou hast but five years well to redeem
 all thy former mispent years whereby to
 gain an Eternal being in Heaven, yet God
 doth know whether many here present or
 any here present have so long to live, to
 repent

spent for all the years vbe have spent in
 in, if thou wer't born to day, thy journey
 is not an hundred years, if thou be a Man
 half thy time is spent already, if thou be an
 old Man, then thou art drawing to thy Inn,
 and thy Race is but a Breach, therefore as
 Christ said to his Disciples, when he found
 them sleeping, (Could ye not Watch one
 hour) so I say to my self and to you all here
 present, can vbe not pray, can vbe not sus-
 ter a little vvhile, he vvhich is tired can tra-
 vel a little vway, a little further, one step
 more for a Kingdom, for this God vvhould not
 have Men knobb vvhether they shall dye (be-
 cause they should make Ready at all times
 having no more certainty of one hour then
 another, therefore our Savio: saith, Watch,
 because ye know not when the Lord will come
 to take you, and judg you.

Happy are they vvhich hear the Word
 and keep it, thus you see that Death is the
 last upon Earth, that the time of Man is
 set, that his Race is short, that he thinks
 not of it, that if he did remember it, it
 would make him apply his mind to Good
 as

as he doth to Evil, and nobb I end as I
began.

The Lord teach us to number our days,
that we may apply our hearts to Wisdom.
Amen.

FINIS.



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